

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS PROCEDURES

Introduction

Executive Order 13164 requires Federal agencies to establish written procedures for processing requests for reasonable accommodation by employees and applicants with qualified disabilities. It is an important part of the government's national policy to create additional employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

To help ensure that FMS meets its responsibility of providing reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities, the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity (OEOD) has been designated to receive, process, and monitor all requests for accommodations. Effective immediately, all requests for accommodation from employees and job applicants at both headquarters and the regional financial centers will be processed through the Disability Program Manager. The Disability Program Manager is available to provide assistance to employees, managers, and human resource officials requesting accommodation. Additionally, FMS has established a service-wide central fund to cover all costs necessary to accommodate qualified employees and applicants with a disability.

Making the Request

An individual with a disability may make a request for reasonable accommodation at any time. The process begins as soon as the request is made. Initial requests may be made either orally or in writing, with the immediate supervisor or directly to the Disability Program Manager.

Who May Make the Request

A request can be made by an FMS employee or job applicant, family member, friend, health professional, or an appointed representative when made on behalf of an employee or applicant. All verbal requests must be followed up with a written request.

Medical Documentation

In some cases a disability may be obvious or otherwise already known to the management official or the Disability Program Manager. In this case, medical documentation may not be necessary. However, when a disability and need for reasonable accommodation are not obvious or otherwise already known, it may be necessary for the individual to provide documentation about the disability and/or

functional limitations. In these situations, the Disability Program Manager will request medical documentation directly from the individual. All medical information, including information about functional limitations and reasonable accommodation needs, will be kept confidential. The information may be disclosed only to supervisors and managers or to first aid and safety personnel, when appropriate.

Processing Time

Time frames for processing requests depend on the nature of the accommodation. If the request is simple and does not involve supporting medical documentation or other extenuating circumstances, the accommodation will be processed as soon as possible, but no more than 20 business days from the date the request is received by the Disability Program Manager. Examples of extenuating circumstances may include but are not limited to:

- The procurement processing time to acquire equipment as a means of an accommodation;
- The testing period of the equipment by the disabled employee on a trial basis to ensure that it is effective;
- The need for medical documentation to be evaluated by the agency physician.

In the event there is a denial of a request for reasonable accommodation, the Approval Official will issue a written decision stating the specific reasons for the denial and will provide information as it relates to the individual's right to file an EEO discrimination complaint.

Further Information

Additional information has been posted on the OEOD intranet website. If you have any questions or need further information, please call (202) 874-8330. Requests for reasonable accommodation may be submitted to the Disability Program Manager, 3700 East West Hwy, Room 133, Hyattsville, MD 20782, or by fax on (202) 874-8660.